

**ABSTRACT**

A sound masking system for shaping the ambient noise level in a physical environment. The sound masking system comprises a networked and distributed system having a number of master units coupled together and to a control unit. One or more of the master units may include satellite sound masking units which function to reproduce an audio signal generated by a central sound masking module. The audio signal comprises a sound masking signal, a paging signal or a sound masking signal mixed with a paging signal. The sound masking signal is generated by the central sound masking module or a selected from a number of sound masking signal inputs at the control unit. Each of the master units is addressable over the network by the control unit enabling the control unit to control the contour, spectral band, and gain characteristics of the audio output signal. The system may also include a remote control unit which provides the capability to tune and adjust each master sound masking unit in situ without requiring physical access through the ceiling installation.